FY 2016
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **February 3, 2017.**

(NOTE: Italicized comments are for reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

Project Name	Red River Abandoned Mine Closures
Date the Decision is needed (m/d/y)	June 1, 2017
District name (or "Forestwide")	Red River Ranger District
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email *If a partnership, please add their name, phone # and email, but an FS employee MUST be the proponent and point of contact.*	Marty Jones, (208) 983-5158 martinjones@fs.fed.us
Legal Location *T, R, and Sec must be entered.*	T27N, R7E, SW 1/4 Section 19 T28N, R7E, NE ¼ Section 35
County(ies) where project located?	Idaho County
District Ranger / Line Officer's Name *Responsible for signing the Decision document*	Terry Nevius
Is this project covered in a current NEPA project?	No
Watershed and subwatershed the project is located? *Clearwater, Hangman/Palouse/Rock, Lower North Fork Clearwater, Lochsa*	Crooked River, Tributary to South Fork Clearwater River

In which CE Category does this project fit? *Provide citation (ex. 36CFR 220.6(d)(x) or 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)). See - O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\CE Categories*	36 CFR 220.6(e)(8) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include but are not limited to: (i) Authorizing geophysical investigations which use existing roads that may require incidental repair to reach sites for drilling core holes, temperature gradient holes, or seismic shot holes; (ii) Gathering geophysical data using shot hole, vibroseis, or surface charge methods; (iii) Trenching to obtain evidence of mineralization; (iv) Clearing vegetation for sight paths or from areas used for investigation or support facilities; (v) Redesigning or rearranging surface facilities within an approved site; (vi) Approving interim and final site restoration measures; and (vii) Approving a plan for exploration which authorizes repair of an existing road and the construction of 1/3 mile of temporary road; clearing vegetation from an acre of land for trenches, drill pads, or support facilities.
<u>If submitting using a "36 CFR 220.6 (d)" category above</u>, does the DR/Line Officer want a Letter to the File (*not scoped to public*) or a Decision Memo (*scoped to public*)? LTF DM	
List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located. **MA 12D, 12B**	

What are the desired conditions for the Management Area(s)?
Management Area 12 consists primarily of forested lands. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented as are a variety of commercially valuable, softwood tree species. A variety of physical and biological environments occur as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation (approximately 3,800-6,500 feet), and climatic factors. This management area occurs across the entire nonclassified portion of the Forest. Although this management area consists primarily of productive forest land, there are minor inclusions of nonforest and low productivity forest lands.

B. Goals
Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis. Develop equal distribution of age classes to optimize sustained timber production. Manage at levels and intensities consistent with the schedules described in this plan to provide for other multiple uses and resources.
Manage for roaded natural recreation.
The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 109,444 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 310,544 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 114,225 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

Is the project in a Roadless Area? Yes*

* If yes, answer the questions in the 'Project in Roadless Area' table below, **AND** complete a Briefing Paper - note special requirements for maps. Provide the completed Briefing Paper to Environmental Coordinator and Brian Riggers prior to scoping.

(*See O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\ Reference Material\ Roadless Rule Info\General Roadless Info for Briefing Paper Info and Template.)*

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No

If yes, which one(s)?

* If yes, you must contact Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us, 935-4270, BEFORE submitting this proposal, to discuss how the project may affect the area.

1987 Forest Plan maps are found at O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_ Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Management Areas

Does the project involve road construction, reconstruction, temporary roads, or haul routes?
No

* If yes, answer the questions in the 'Project Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, or Haul Routes' table below.

Are Municipal Watersheds located in the project area? No
If yes, which one(s)?

Are there floodplains or wetlands in the project area? No

Is the project located in an RHCA? No

Is the project in the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area? No

Describe the existing condition of the project area.

There are two existing open mine shafts and one open adit in the Crooked River watershed. These structures pose a hazard to the public. See maps and photos for details.

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action?

The purpose of the proposed action is the permanent closure of three hazardous mine sites. The need is to eliminate public safety risks associated with two open shafts and one open adit in the Crooked River drainage while maintaining wildlife habitat and the historical integrity of the sites.

Abandoned mine adits and shafts typically contain hazards such as unstable rock and decayed supports, deadly gas and lack of oxygen, explosive and toxic chemicals, hidden vertical drops and the potential for becoming lost in multiple dark tunnels. Shafts pose a particular hazard as they can be easily walked or driven into by unsuspecting forest users who can then be trapped, seriously injured or even killed by what could be a very long fall.

Describe the Proposed Action:

The Red River Ranger District proposes to close three hazardous mine sites during the 2017 field season. They are discussed separately below, as follows:

Badger shaft #1 is located immediately adjacent to Forest Road # 311 near the top of Badger Summit at T27N, R8E, SE ¼ of the NW ¼, Section 19. It was previously closed due to a plug of soil and rock at the upper end of the shaft. This collar collapsed two or three years ago, leaving the shaft open to an indeterminate depth. This shaft is a particular hazard because of its proximity to the road. It could be easily walked or driven into by an unsuspecting forest user.

The proposed action is to close this shaft permanently by one of two methods:

The first, and easiest, method is to simply plug and fill the top of the shaft by use of an expandable foam plug at the narrowest part of the shaft (some 20' or so below the ground surface), then backfilling the shaft to the surface with available fill material which is available nearby.

The second method would be used in the event that a survey found the shaft to be occupied by bat species. This method would entail placing a section of 36"-48" diameter culvert vertically into the shaft with the top end level with or slightly above the ground surface, filling around it with foam at the bottom of the culvert, then by backfilling to the surface with soil and rock. A metal grate sized appropriately for access by bats would then be permanently affixed to the top of the culvert.
This project would be accomplished by the use of a backhoe, dump truck, and associated small hand tools and materials.

Badger shaft #2 is located approximately 275' from Forest Road #311 on Badger Summit at T27N, R8E, NW ¼ of Section 19. There is a short access road that leads from Road #311 to the shaft. The shaft itself is partially collapsed and the remainder is approximately 20' deep. There is a shallow trench that extends from the shaft approximately 60'. The shaft is a safety risk because an ATV could be driven into the area and the opening of the shaft is hard to detect from the top of the adjacent slope. There is a mound of fill on-site and it is assumed that this material had been removed from the trench and shaft. The fill pile is moderately vegetated and could be used to backfill the shaft and trench although additional material may be needed, which could be hauled from an alternate site.
The easiest method of closing this shaft would be to simply use fill material from existing sources to fill the shaft. A small bulldozer could be used to move the material, but a better way would be to use a backhoe or excavator to fill the shaft in lifts or layers so it could be packed down as it is filled. A dump truck would be used to transport material to the site, as needed.

The Miners Ditch Adit is located off of a very steep ATV trail (#807) located about one mile north of the town of Orogrande at T28N, R7E, NW ¼ of the NE ¼, section 35. The trail leads upslope to a relatively flat saddle at roughly 5,000 feet elevation. At this location a small mining ditch crosses the #807 trail and is known as the Miners Ditch Trail #805 (not signed). The #805 trail continues southwest for about 1,800 feet to the adit location. The #805 trail is overgrown and not accessible by ATV. There is also considerable downed wood along the trail.
The open adit is located roughly 20-30 feet below the trail. The adit does not appear to be very deep and is approximately 15-20 feet in length. The adit portal is roughly 6x6 feet. There were no timbers or internal support beams observed.
This trail was surveyed by contractors in 2014 with the thought that it could be a candidate for closure by bat gate. Due to the remote location, limited access, and lack of support timbers, the open adit was considered at the time to be a minimal public safety risk. This site will be evaluated by Forest personnel in the spring of 2017 to determine the level of risk and if a closure is appropriate or not. If it is found to be appropriate, the closure would be done by means of a permanent bat gate across the portal. This closure would be done by building a metal gate in place by cutting and welding steel bar stock in place. Equipment needed would include ATVs and trailers, portable gas powered electric

List all design criteria/mitigation measures to be included with the proposed action.

Design criteria for these closures will be furnished as a separate document Prior to the analysis of this project.

What Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be used with this project?

State of Idaho Best Management Practices for mining

Best management practices for weed management and water quality as applicable.

Specific* individuals / groups / businesses who should be contacted (<u>with their mailing and email addresses</u>) during the Scoping Process.

Individual mining claimants who may be affected. Proponent will furnish contact information of those individuals for scoping

(NOTE: tribal / state / county governments and agencies will already be contacted)*

Please attach to your project submission email, separate from this form, a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) per the instructions outlined below. Do not give links to maps or datasets. Please make sure that the layers can be turned on/off on your PDF map(s).

At least one map, with (preferably) a "portrait" orientation, showing the project location/activities as points, e.g. culvert, mineral exploration site, etc.; lines, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc.; and/or the project boundary as a polygon, e.g. stand, treatment area, etc. Do not use a point when treating an area, use a polygon.

The map(s) need to include identifying features, such as towns, roads, trails, rivers/streams, geophysical landmarks, etc. to identify where the project is on the landscape The features to include are up to you, as long as they are clearly labeled.

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map's base layer (see below*). This will standardize the appearance of the maps for scoping. Please do not add contour lines to the map unless needed. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.

The preferred scale is 1:24000; however, if the project area can't be shown at 1:24K, a map showing the entire project area, and additional maps showing the parts of the project in detail are acceptable. Conversely, if the 1:24K scale is too large (i.e. the location appears as a tiny point or a thin line on a large landscape), use a smaller scale to provide project detail(s) while ensuring that the project location is identifiable.

The map(s) should include, at a minimum, a Title (i.e. the project name - do not include 'Exhibit A', etc.); a legend with the feature/activity layer(s) clearly labeled, e.g. culvert, fence line, treatment area, etc.; a scale in miles (not km) using full miles (ex. 0_0.25_0.5_1.0 miles; ending at 0.5 miles okay); and a north arrow.

The main point is, the map(s) should clearly show where the project is located on the Forest and what activity or activities are being proposed.

** The Small NEPA geodatabase contains feature classes, including the Forest Visitor Map, that can be used for map creation. The geodatabase is found at:*

T:\FS\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\GIS\SmallNEPA.gdb

If you need help with accessing and/or working with the geodatabase in GIS, contact your Zone GIS Specialist (first) or you can contact Jim Lutes at jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists want shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activity(ies) before they will begin their analyses. The shapefile needs to be labeled with the Project Name and Feature, ex. X culvert replace, X road decom, X thinning area, etc.

Please send the shapefile including the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml – to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us prior to or when submitting this form.

Note: A location where the shapefile(s) can be found/downloaded does not meet the obligation. The project shapefile(s) must be submitted per the instructions above or the project will be delayed until they are sent.

Note: Providing the shapefile(s) ***does not substitute*** *for providing the map(s).*

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource and your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028
Cultural – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us; 983-4040
Fisheries – Christine Stewart, christinestewart@fs.fed.us; 963-4211
Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cvalle@fs.fed.us; 963-4203
Minerals – Marty Jones, martinjones@fs.fed.us; 983-5158
Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270
Soils – Robert Bergstrom, robertbergstrom@fs.fed.us; 963-4202 (temporary)
Wildlife – Jim Lutes, jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202

Project in Roadless Area

What is the Roadless Area name? Idaho Roadless *O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Roadless Rule Info*	**Idaho Roadless Area (IRA) Name:** Dixie Summit/Nut Hill **Forest Plan IRA Name *(if different):***
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management classification because permitted activities vary by classification. *Classifications include:* • *Wild Land Recreation* • *Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance* • *Primitive* • *Backcountry Restoration* • *General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland*	Classification: Backcountry
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? No * If yes, see *http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.23	
Does the project involve cutting trees? No * *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.24	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? No * *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.25	

Project Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, and/or Haul Routes

Note: Specialists will address items 9-11 *(in italics)* below.

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES / NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS
1. Will road construction or reconstruction be required? Type of road and length.	No	
2. Will temporary roads be needed?	No	
3. Will road maintenance be needed? Who will perform?	No	
4. Will there be a change to the current road restrictions?	No	
5. Are haul roads part of an established snowmobile network?	No	
6. Are there public safety concerns for roads, trails, or other road improvements?	No	
7. Are there other improvements which will require protection?	No	
8. Does the area currently meet Forest Plan standards for soils?		
9. Will the project impact elk security?		
10. Will the project or log haul impact winter range?		
11. Will the project impact critical elk summer range?		

JC : 11/28/2016

Additional Information: